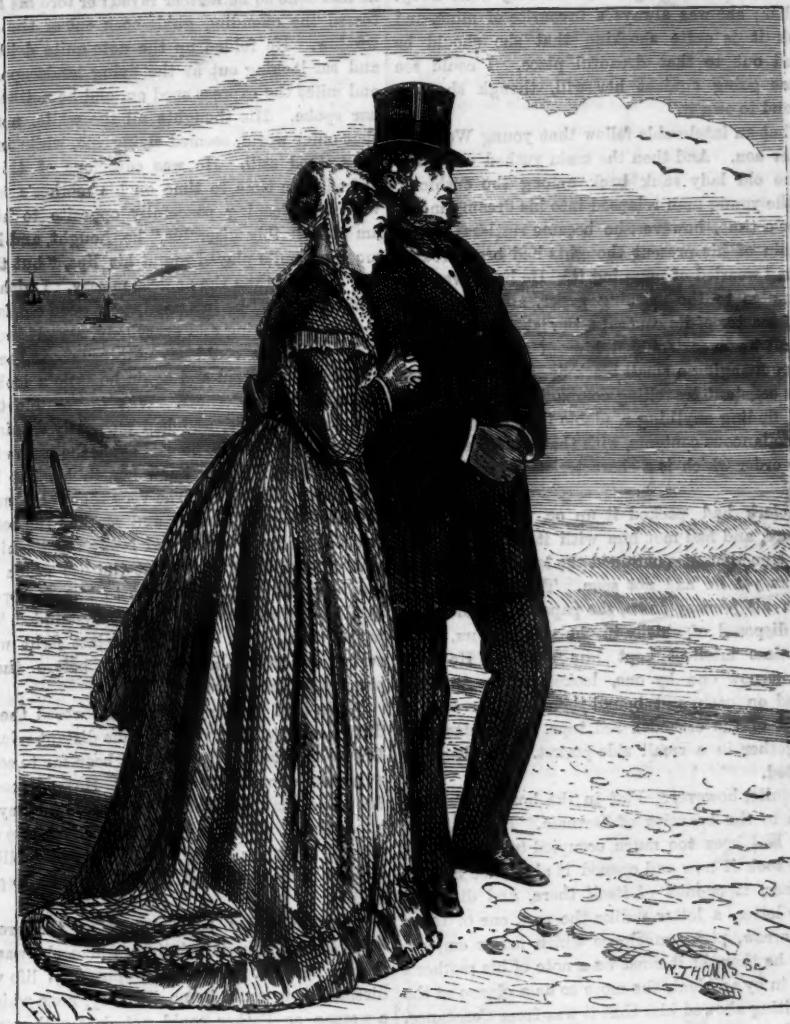


# THE COUNTRY

Saturday, March 20, 1869.



"They were looking out to sea."—p. 372.

## ESTHER WEST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PEGGY OGLIVIE'S INHERITANCE."

### CHAPTER XLIX.—THE GUIDE-BOOK.

**T**HIS is the very day the Wests were to have sailed," said Benjamin Carrington to his mother, as the train in which they were seated stopped for a few minutes at one of the stations on the up line to London. They were the only occupants of the carriage, but for all that they had been very sparing in conversation during the long hours of their journey that had already passed. Mrs.

Carrington found that speaking while the train was in motion fatigued her, and her son was not sorry to keep silence and give himself up to his own meditations.

"So it is, my dear," she answered; "I am sorry we did not see them again before they went away. I like her; she was always a favourite of mine, and I think it is quite shocking that she should be dragged out to that dreadful place. I could see she was going against her will, though she was too proud to own it."

"What an intolerable fellow that young West is," said her son. And then the train rushed on again, and the old lady sank back among the cushions, while the young man relapsed into his dreamy mood.

After a time, however, he became restless; either the chain of his present thoughts had been broken, or he had wearied of pursuing it. He had given full ten minutes to the morning paper, and considered himself master of its contents, the latest intelligence being all he ever troubled himself to read. So he began rummaging a small black despatch-bag, which was his constant travelling companion, less with any idea of finding anything readable than of arranging its miscellaneous contents, with that almost excessive love of order which is a characteristic of such minds as his.

His clerk had packed it up on the eve of his departure, and had met him with it at the station, telling him that it contained the letters and papers which as yet he had not seen. The letters he had read on his journey down, the papers he had afterwards disposed of, chiefly in the small hours, when his restless intellect kept him awake. He took them out now one by one, looked at the writing endorsed on each, and bound them together with a stray bit of the orthodox red tape. The letters he put together in a small side-pocket. The bag was exhausted.

Not quite, however. Flat in the bottom of it lay a guide to the beauties of Devonia. He had never read it, had been too much occupied to think about it. He took it now and opened it about the middle, or, rather, it opened of itself there, and disclosed another letter, a letter unlike the rest, one of those long, narrow, pinky envelopes which ladies employ. At first he thought it must be a note of his mother's slipped in by accident, the more so as a glance at the handwriting showed him that it was from Constance, with whose notes to his mother he was perfectly familiar. But no, the letter was unopened, and addressed to himself. There could be no mistake. "Benjamin Carrington, Esq.," and the postmark showed it to be nearly three weeks old. The unfortunate guide-book had been thrust into the black bag back downwards; the letter had slipped into the book, and the book had slipped into the bottom of the bag when the papers had been pulled out. All this flashed through his mind in a moment, even before he had

time to open the note, though he did this impatiently enough.

It was the note which Constance Vaughan had written to him on the eve of the holidays, and which he had never seen. He read it at a glance. When he had done so he neither raved nor tore his hair, nor tossed the offending guide-book out of the carriage window. He folded up the note quite deliberately, and sat looking out at the flying landscape. Miles and miles the express sped on, and he neither moved nor spoke. His thoughts all the while, not unlike that outer world, seemed flying too, while in reality they stood still. He was conscious of this as he looked from time to time on his mother's face, who was now sleeping peacefully opposite to him. "I am not horribly miserable," he thought, and his most mocking smile played round his lips, "but this feeling is worse than the acutest misery. I wish I could shake it off and be in a passion—a good old-fashioned rage at everything and everybody, myself included."

Of course he could say nothing about the note to his mother. Again and again he stole a look at her, not without tenderness. Was it possible that she was aware of this, and had purposely detained him in Devonshire? No, he cast aside the unworthy suggestion. Worldly he knew her to be, but base he could not think her. The very thought roused him to do battle with himself, and recalled the resolution and self-reliance which had lately stirred him. He was determined to carry out the life which he had planned, though she was lost to him for ever. He would not sink into a scoffing sickly-minded Sybarite without an effort. It was his last fight with the sulky demon Do-nothing, and before the train stopped he had prevailed.

When Mrs. Carrington had discovered the immediate necessity for a visit to some distant relations in Devonshire, her motive had not been far to seek, and was quite apparent to her son. He had resented it far more than he would have resented any active opposition. It was, in fact, treating him like a child, and he took an early opportunity of telling his mother what were his intentions with regard to Esther.

Mrs. Carrington happily took up the ground of objection to Esther's relatives, where she was easily met by her son. Where the spheres of life were so distinct there could be no difficulty, none which such a woman as Esther could not deal with gracefully and graciously. A weaker woman, by her very fears and scruples, might make a mess of it; but she, he felt sure, would be able to act with judgment as well as tenderness. Then he did not intend to go in for a life of pleasure, which meant living for other people's pleasure rather than your own. He meant to enter upon an active life, whether in public or private. He did not, in planning all this for himself, expect her, his mother, to provide the means. He meant to begin life as a poor man, with a small establishment.

This latter portion of his plan was, perhaps, the most distasteful of all to Mrs. Carrington, who loved power, and had on more than one occasion made her son, fond of him and proud of him as she was, feel that she duly appreciated her position as mistress of the purse. He had often felt, in his more active mood, that he lacked freedom, the freedom which only independence can give, and he had lately acknowledged to himself a deficiency of the manly virtues which independence breeds. Obstinate on the score of trifles he had always been. Now he set himself firmly to make the great stand of his life.

It was not done without a struggle: but at last Mrs. Carrington found herself obliged to yield, and it was then that her son had written his misleading note to Constance. But having given in on the chief point, she expected to be yielded to on the minor one of still further delay, and in the midst of this new struggle she was seconded by a sharp attack of illness, which confined her for a week to her bed, and for another to the sofa.

Her son had occupied much of his time during her illness, which was only alarming for the first few days, in arranging his affairs, and also in discovering how very much he was in love; and all this in the intervals of the demands made upon him by a large party of very young ladies, to whom he proved an interesting object of study, and who were convinced that he needed a great deal of their society.

He would not have acknowledged a hope so utterly groundless; but as the train neared London, and he felt his resolution return, he began to fancy that Esther might still be his—not even yet be gone. Ships did not always set sail on the appointed days. But, if even the worst had happened that seemed probable, the other side of the world was not too far to follow her.

It was with something like impatience that he leaped from the train and assisted his mother from the carriage. Her own man was waiting on the platform to perform all other needful services; but it was with a gasp of astonishment that she heard Mr. Carrington say, "Here is the carriage; I will see you to it, and then I must be absent for an hour or two.

"Where are you going?" said Mrs. Carrington, in astonishment.

"I am going to make an inquiry which cannot be delayed," he answered.

"I never heard of it before," she murmured.

"Do not wait dinner for me," was his only reply, and he was gone.

"So unlike Benjamin," thought his mother. "He never used to do anything in a hurry. But he is altogether unlike himself," she added, mentally, with a sigh, as she sank back in her carriage and was driven away alone.

## CHAPTER L TOO LATE.

THE same night saw Benjamin Carrington speeding back to Plymouth. He had learnt that the ship had left Gravesend a day later than had been announced, and that, therefore, in all probability, she would likewise be a day later in making her final start from the southern port. He had also made sure that both the Wests and the Potters were gone.

He had been somewhat afraid to tell his mother how matters stood. He had shrunk from seeing her exhibit some triumph on the occasion—that species of triumph which profound egotists exhibit when events occur to favour their wishes—a triumph as if the course of the universe had been ordered for their especial service. He shrank from seeing this, and yet before dinner was over he had communicated to her the fact of Esther's departure with her family.

"All gone!" the old lady ejaculated, taking the intelligence quite differently from what he had expected. "How do you know?"

"I heard of it by letter to-day, and I have been to both the houses. It is four days since the Potters sailed, and the Wests went down to Plymouth only this morning."

"What a pity we did not know that these Potters were going," she remarked.

Esther, cut off from her objectionable relations, and managed by her, Mrs. Carrington, was quite a different person from Esther with a low-born mother and ill-bred sisters at her back. She did not doubt her power of managing her. She no more doubted her power of managing any human being than she doubted her power to speak. Esther was poor, and she rather liked the idea of her son marrying a poor wife. Then she was by far the most distinguished-looking young lady of her acquaintance; and above all things Mrs. Carrington worshipped distinction.

Mr. Carrington looked up at his mother with a questioning glance as she repeated her last words.

She smiled at him graciously. "We might have managed to detain one of them," she added.

The old lady had made one of the conquests in which she delighted. Her son looked at her gratefully, and thanked her warmly.

She was, however, hardly prepared for a movement so decisive as starting off by the mail train in the hope of catching them up. This was what her son proposed, and, moreover, intended to execute, notwithstanding all that she could urge to the contrary. He would survive the fatigue, and sleep very well in the train, he had no doubt."

He had, however, miscalculated his powers for once. Over-strained and sleepless, he sped through the night; and the hopeless nature of his errand forced itself upon him more and more. He might be in time to see Esther once more, and to tell her how and why he had come; but was it likely that she would forsake her friends and go back with him

at a moment's notice? It is true that Constance and Mr. Vaughan would be there to receive her; but he could hardly flatter himself that she loved him well enough to take a step so sudden. What a fool he had been in the past, and on what a wild-goose chase had he come for the present!

In spite of these depressing thoughts, however, he had determined to press his suit in the plainest terms, and snatch Esther, if possible, from the very brink of fate. Faith, too, had risen with courage, and he never doubted for a moment that she would remain wholly uninfluenced by any motive save the one which he desired—attachment to himself. That he should find her unable to return his love, was the only possibility he had to dread.

When the pearly light of the May morning glimmered in upon him, and the solitary fellow-traveller, who had been snoring comfortably by his side for the last three hours at least, Benjamin Carrington looked the anxious lover to perfection. He was haggard with sleeplessness and fatigue, and instead of his usual calm elegance of person and demeanour, he had all the appearance of roused and restless energy. He was no longer looking down on the conflict, but taking part in it—taking his share of hurry, and strife, and wound. Could he have looked at himself just then, bodily or mentally, in that mirror of self-reflection which he so constantly held up to himself, and which had often marred his singleness of purpose, and was fast destroying his simplicity of character, he would have been too much astonished even for self-mockery. But for once in his life Benjamin Carrington had no thought of himself. Well for him if he can pitch his future life at this far nobler key.

The sun was shining full and fair on land and sea when he got out at the station, and stepped into the nearest hotel. He had not far to seek for the intelligence he wanted—it met him on the threshold: the *City* had sailed the evening before. "She kept her time," said his informant; "the wind was in her favour, and she went off an hour before sundown. I saw her off myself. You weren't going in her, sir?" he added, noticing the expression of disappointment on his listener's face, which certainly did not keep its usual impassive look of well-bred indifference.

"No," he replied; "I only came to see a friend on board."

"Too late, sir," and the man shook his head in a rather exasperating manner, while he received his order for a cup of coffee, and led the way to a room.

"There's always a party too late for everything. There was a party just missed being too late for the *City*—caught her swinging by her last rope off the point of the pier. Such a to-do to get them off! They didn't go from this house, for they came straight from the station; but they were to have stayed here, and I gave them a hand, and got them off all right."

"Do you know their names?" said Mr. Carrington. It was just possible that it might be the Wests, and he wanted to find out Constance and her father, who, in all likelihood, were still in the place.

"I don't know their names," the man answered, "for their luggage was in before. They would have been done for if it hadn't; as it was, they had a race for it, and the poor lady hadn't a minute to say good-bye to her pa and another young lady—her sister, I s'pose; and the young gentleman, he cried, 'Come along, Kate,' and she looked wild at him, though she didn't say nothing. It was all his fault they were so late, I s'pose," and the man smiled as if he had witnessed an aside of the comedy of domestic life—a little tiff between a happy young couple, instead of having caught a glimpse of its deepest tragedy.

"Do you know where the elderly gentleman, whom you thought was the lady's father, is stopping?" asked Mr. Carrington. "I think they belong to the party I came to see."

Yes, he was stopping in the house—he and the young lady; but he didn't know if they were up yet. He would go and see, if the gentleman pleased. And in the meantime coffee was served.

No; it was too early to trouble the lady and gentleman, even if they were his friends, decided the new arrival; but he gave the man his card, and told him to ascertain if the gentleman's name was Vaughan, and to present the card to him at breakfast.

The man politely returned from the bar to say that the name of the lady and gentleman he had indicated was Vaughan, and that he would attend to the instructions he had received.

Then, after slight but much-needed refreshment, Mr. Carrington set out again. It was still too early to seek the Vaughans, but he had got into that state in which repose is impossible—in which the tension of brain and nerve must be gradually relaxed before rest can be achieved. He thought the sea air would cool the fever of his head, the outlook on the water soothe his spirit. He went down to the harbour, and paced about the shore, curiously seeking from some loitering sailors corroborative evidence concerning the sailing of the vessel.

He had thus wandered aimlessly for an hour or so, and was thinking of returning to the hotel, when he saw before him, at a little distance, Constance and her father. They did not see him. They were looking out to sea, pointing, in all probability, to the spot where the last glimpse of the departing ship had been caught by their watching eyes.

He went up to them slowly. They were evidently in the deepest grief, though outwardly calm. Constance was clinging to her father piteously. She was the first to observe Mr. Carrington's approach. She did not even look surprised, far less pleased.

"You here, Mr. Carrington," she said, coldly, as he held out his hand.

"And too late," he answered, speaking the words which were sounding in his brain like the murmur of the sea.

He had turned to receive Mr. Vaughan's greeting. "You are still in Devon?" said the latter, Mr. Vaughan's idea being, evidently, that he had come from somewhere in the neighbourhood.

"I came down from London last night," replied Mr. Carrington. "I thought the ship was not to have sailed till to-day."

It must have surely been something more than common friendship that had prompted this trip of Mr. Carrington's; and, having painfully learnt a little wisdom in such matters, Mr. Vaughan looked from one to the other of the faces by his side. He saw nothing melting the sad sternness of his daughter's, however, and breathed more freely as he said, "We were not much more fortunate. Through a mistake of Harry's we only arrived in time to see the vessel moving off."

The remembrance of the scene of yesterday brought bitter tears to the eyes of Constance, which she had to turn away to hide.

"And when do you intend to return?" inquired Carrington, after a painful silence.

"By this morning's express," replied Mr. Vaughan. "We came out before breakfast to take a farewell look," and he nodded out toward the distant horizon.

"I should have been glad to return with you," said Mr. Carrington, "but as I only travelled up yesterday and have been on the move for the last four-and-twenty hours, I fear I must remain and get a few hours' rest."

It did not appear that Constance was taking the slightest notice of him, though the last words were spoken at her, and in a decidedly injured tone—a tone which Constance had often mocked in the happy days of old.

At last he addressed her directly. "I did not know till yesterday that your friend had gone also. Did you see her before she sailed?"

Then he had not received her note. It was, in all probability, lying at his chambers. Constance could not but look her desire for explanation as these thoughts passed through her mind. "I parted from her in London," she answered, "hoping to see her again; but we were too late to get on board—indeed,

they would not have allowed us, every one not going with the ship had been sent on shore. Kate and I had to part quite suddenly at last, and in the confusion I did not even catch a glimpse of Esther, though she must have been standing on the deck."

"We lost sight of Kate, too," said Mr. Vaughan; "in fact, we could see nothing but a crowd of people waving hats and handkerchiefs—black figures standing out against a brilliant evening sky. Even had the light been better, poor Constance would not have seen much, I fear," he added, looking tenderly at her.

The three walked on together, Mr. Carrington going over to the side of Constance. "Let us hope the parting is only for a time," he said, gently. "Harry is sure to come back again, the distance is nothing now-a-days."

He spoke as if the antipodes might be reached in a Long Vacation tour. The tone of hope and energy was new to her, and she raised her eyes to his face, the tears standing on their thick lashes. He comforted her, and unconsciously she accepted the comfort. They stood nearer to each other than they had ever done before.

"You will come and breakfast with us?" said Mr. Vaughan.

"Unless," Constance put in, with that touch of womanly care which so often wins a man's heart by its betrayal of interest in his personal concerns—"unless Mr. Carrington would prefer to rest; he looks quite worn out."

"I think I shall go back to London with you after all," said that gentleman.

"But you have just travelled down," said Mr. Vaughan.

"And travelled up only the day before," said Constance, showing that she had been paying attention to him after all.

"I'll tell you what we shall do," said Mr. Vaughan, kindly; "we will stay here another day. I should like to stay here another day." And his eyes went seaward wistfully. "You shall go and rest now." And he laid his hand on the young man's shoulder as they came up to the door of the hotel. "And come and dine with us in the evening. To-morrow we can all go up together."

(To be continued.)

## THE FAMILY IN HEAVEN AND EARTH

BY THE REV. J. S. SIDEBOOTHAM, M.A., RECTOR OF ST. MILDRED'S, CANTERBURY.

EPHESIANS III. 14-19.

HE very earnest prayer of the Apostle Paul, which is comprehended in this passage of his writings, is one well worthy of the careful consideration of all who are called by Christ's name, and who profess to be Christ's followers. Such zealous

goodwill on his part for others, may well be suggestive to all, of that which they owe certainly to themselves, but far more to their God.

The apostle begins by reminding them of whom it is that the whole family in heaven and earth is named—that is to say, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, even God, the Father of all

men, the preserver of all things, to whom the Saviour has taught us to address our supplications in an especial manner: "Our Father which art in heaven." But if it is of the Father that we, as members of the great family in heaven and earth are *named*, it is by Christ his Son that we are admitted into the privileges of son-ship, and are made his children; and as in God we are united into one great family, so in Christ is that union cemented and made firm by the love which, beginning in himself, is by him implanted in our hearts. The Father adopted the whole human family when he gave his Son to die for all, and thus made all his sons, so that all *call* him Father; and the Son founded that church built on a rock, as well triumphant in heaven as militant on earth, which consists of all nations, and kindreds, and people. And as all of the seed of Jacob were named Israelites, so are all the sons of God—all that profess the name and the faith of Christ—*named* Christians. In Christ all men are of but one kin; in him "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for all are *one* in Christ Jesus." If, then, we have received so high and honourable a distinction as to be called the sons of God, and to bear the name of Christ, let us not be faint, but fervent; not wavering, but constant in our faith, to the end, and in the end.

The prayer of the apostle, for those who are united together by this bond of strength so extraordinary—that is to say, son-ship of God and membership of one great family in Christ—is that He of whom they were named "would grant them, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith; that they, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that they might be filled with all the fulness of God."

How much, indeed, is comprised in these words; how great and good things are implied in the prayer which they form! Were we to dwell on them for days together, we should arrive at but a slight portion of their meaning; a lifetime would not suffice to arrive at it in all its fulness and richness; and yet if we will give to such words our careful attention for but a few minutes, they will shed abroad on our souls such grace as was even on the lips of Him who spake as never man spake, and will be as a light to our feet and a lantern to our path. And why will they do this? It is because they tell us of the love of Him who died to save us from death, of the fulness of Him who filleth all space, who possesseth all hearts, in whom we live and move and have

our being—of Him to whom we look for the supply of every needful help for the body, and grace for the soul. But from such words as these, full of good and encouraging tidings as they are, we also learn that the Church of Christ while militant on earth, *even though Christ's*, is not in its perfection. It is always growing and increasing: we may profit, but we cannot be perfect till the corruptible has put on incorruption. The most resolute soldier of us all in the warfare which is before us, has incessant need of every strength, every support which can be made his own, "for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Such enemies are of a power beyond our strength to overcome, unless the Spirit of God "strengthen us," as the apostle here says, "in the inner man," so that although the body wax weak and consume away, we may yet daily receive inward grace and the saving strength of God's right hand. It is the supply of *this* strength that the apostle desires on behalf of those whom he thus lovingly commends to the care of their God. He prays not for the wealth of the world, or even for that health of body which affords outward comfort, but, as it were on his bended knees he earnestly beseeches the Father of his Lord Jesus Christ, that those in whom by his grace he has been instrumental in sowing the seeds of the true faith, may receive that inward strength which will enable them to resist the temptations and avoid the snares of the enemy of souls. What will not that inward strength effect; what difficulties will it not surmount; what obstacles will it not overcome? It is, in truth, neither more nor less than the working within those to whom it is granted, of that all-powerful Spirit of God described by the Prophet Isaiah as "the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." This is indeed the Spirit which the prophet foretold should possess Him of whom he speaks as the Branch that should grow out of the roots of Jesse; it is the Spirit which, as so foretold, did truly inspire the Redeemer of mankind while on earth in the form of man; it is the Spirit which—such is his love for us—he has promised shall also be with us to guide ourselves. Such is the honour with which he regards us his creatures, that he withholds not from us the Spirit which possessed—and possesses—even himself. There is indeed this difference, that the Spirit was given to him *not by measure*, while it is imparted to us weak and imperfect ones according at once to God's will as to the share of its influence of which he deems us worthy, and our own capacity to receive the

priceless gift. But knowing as we do know that this Spirit is thus bestowed upon ourselves "by measure," let us not, when we are conscious of its presence, check its operation or quench its kindly warmth, working on and quickening our dull and cold affections, and bringing out whatever good lies hid within our hearts. This is, in few words, somewhat of that for which the apostle prays, when he expresses his desire that those whom he so loved might be "strengthened with might by God's Spirit in the inner man." He goes on, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith," and then proceeds to speak of the wondrous effects of this spiritual indwelling of their Saviour within men. That Christ may dwell in you. Not merely that he may come within you, as a guest, to sup (as he himself in the Spirit says that he will do to those who will open to him at his knock), but dwell within you, as one of yourselves, as being, as it were, head of the family. But this indwelling of Christ must be by faith. We must have the faith to receive him in the first instance, and to recognise him, and feel his presence, and confess him before men, as well as acknowledge him ourselves when he is so "within us." To do this we must be, as the apostle continues, "rooted and grounded in love." A house surely founded is able to withstand fearful winds and violent storms. A tree deeply rooted is not overthrown by a tempest: it may snap, but hardly be torn out by the roots. So those that are grounded in faith and rooted in love continue steadfast in their profession in the midst even of persecutions and afflictions for the word's sake; while they that are without root believe but for a while, and have Christ in their hearts only for a season. If trouble comes, but too many are suddenly cast down, and carried away with this or that blast of vain doctrine, as if God had forsaken them. In him who was accounted the wisest of men the Spirit was for a time quenched, and iniquity carried him strangely away from his God; and the Galatians, although they had "begun in the Spirit," yet thought "that they could be made perfect by the flesh, and "removed from him that had called them into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel." Let us therefore, like St. Paul, on our bended knees, humbly implore God that, of the riches of his mercy, he will preserve us from falling away from grace given, and will "strengthen us with might by his Spirit in the inner man." As Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, so long as faith is alive Christ dwells in us and we in him; if our faith be dead, then he who alone is our life has departed out

of our hearts. But faith without works is dead, and must therefore work through that love, in which to have any faith at all we must be rooted and grounded.

Being so rooted and grounded, we may be able to have some comprehension, in common with the saints, of some of the great mysteries which are wrought for us, and in us, to which the apostle refers when he speaks of "the length, and breadth, and depth, and height." Well may we indeed wonder at that which passes the entire comprehension even of angels, and be thankful that we are permitted to enjoy a partial understanding of it in common with saints, with whom we are not worthy to be named. But if we want to understand somewhat more of that which as yet passes our understanding, let us give our thoughts to it, and we can but admire the length of God's patience with us; the breadth of his love; the depth of his mercy; the height of his glory. Let us compare any of the least of these his attributes with the best, and highest, and noblest quality that we can find out in ourselves, and we can then at least wonder that One so high, and great, and perfect as is the Almighty, can think us worthy so much as to live or to move among men, or to have a work to do in the world. Yet his love allots to each one his work, his place, his duty; and if any think that his place or his work in the world is beneath his merit or ability, let him think but a moment of the low estate chosen and filled by his Saviour, who was not only an earthly, but a heavenly king, and reflect that, however humble he be, he is not too humble, too poor, too insignificant, too lowly, to own a large share of the love and regard of Him who cares for sparrows, and clothes the lilies and the grass of the field. It is, indeed, in many other ways, but certainly also in this, that the love of Christ passeth knowledge, and yet we are amazed, not only that this love shall be ours, but that we shall be filled with all the fulness of God. Are we weak and insufficient? He is all that can be required to make up that which is wanting in us. He is himself wisdom, strength, love, mercy, might, power, glory, majesty, perfection. In him coldness is kindled into love; faint-heartedness into zeal; fear into holy confidence. He "makes straight paths for our feet," and on the path he so marks out sheds the light of his grace, and pours forth the life-bestowing gifts of his Spirit; and day by day imparts to those who will receive it, of that fulness which allows none to want; which grants the heart's desire, and fulfills the entire mind, of those who serve him with faith, fear, and love.

## THE SMUGGLER'S FATE.

A TRUE STORY OF THE BRITISH COAST. BY WILLIAM H. G. KINGSTON.

**G**OOD-BYE, Susan—good-bye, my wife. I'll bring thee over a silk gown, and such Brussels lace as you've never yet set eyes on. It will make a lady of you; and you're not far off being one now, to my mind, so don't fret—don't fret, Susan, dear."

These words were uttered by Robert Hanson, a fine sailor-like-looking man. And a bold seaman he was, indeed; but was also unhappily known to be one of the most daring smugglers on the coast. Having kissed his wife affectionately, and knelt down by the side of the cradle in which their infant slept, to bestow another kiss on its smiling lips, he hurried from the cottage.

Susan looked after him sorrowfully. She had entreated him, over and over again—not as earnestly as she might, perhaps—to give up his dangerous and lawless occupation, and with a laugh he had told her that each trip should be his last. Did it never occur to him how his promise might be fulfilled? It did to Susan; and often and often she had trembled at the thought. She had been brought up by praying parents, and had been taught from her childhood to pray, but she could not pray now—she dared not—she felt it would be a mockery. She was wrong, though. She could not pray that God would protect her husband in his lawless occupation, but she might have prayed that her merciful Father in heaven would change his heart—would lead him from the paths of sin, and put a right spirit within him, even although he might be brought to poverty, and she might no longer enjoy the luxuries which he allowed her. She was sure, however, that he could make, by a lawful calling, enough for all their wants; whereas a large portion of what he now gained was spent in feasting and treating with open hand his smuggling companions; so that at the end of the year, except for the dresses and other articles which were utterly useless to Susan, they were very little the better for all his toil and the many fearful risks he had run. She stood watching him with tearful eyes and a foreboding heart, as he descended the cliff on which their cottage stood.

Bob, as Hanson was called by his companions, looked in at three or four of the huts which formed the fishing village at the foot of the cliff, and gave sundry directions to their inmates. The answer he received from all of them was much the same: "Never fear, captain, we'll be ready."

"You understand, Dore," he said, stopping at

one of the huts for some little time, "you'll be on the look-out for us on Tuesday night at Durlstone Point. Now mind you also tell Green, the landlord of the 'Jolly Tar,' to have the two covered carts there, with his fastest horses and trusty men to drive—Bill Snow and Tom Thatcher—they are true men; but not that fellow Dennis—he'll bring the Coast Guard down on us one of these days, you'll see, if we trust him—and take care that we've no lack of hands to run the cargo up the cliff."

Such were some of the directions Hanson gave to his confederates. He then, with active steps, proceeded to a small harbour at a little distance along the shore, where a fast-looking cutter of about forty tons lay at anchor. He hailed her. A preventive man (as the revenue officers are called), with his spyglass under his arm, passed him.

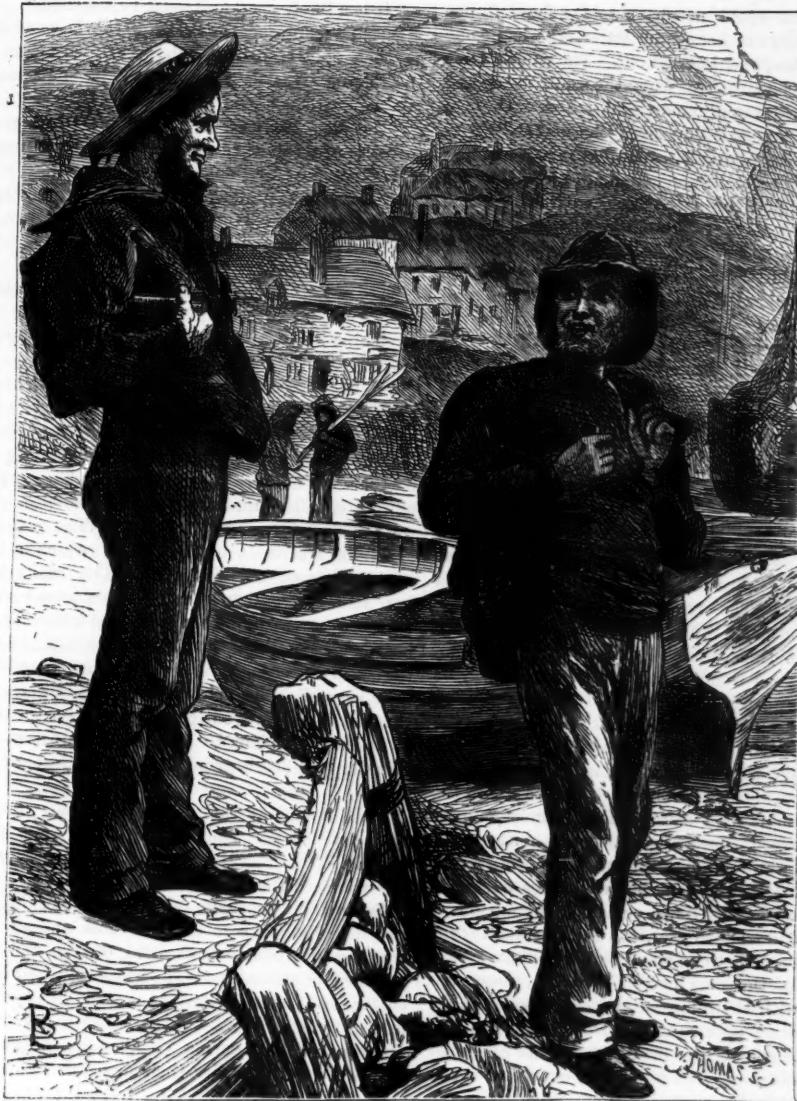
"What, Bob, off again?" he said, in a careless tone; "we'll be on the look-out for you, if you'll tell us when you are coming back."

"May be next week, or the week after, or a month from this; but thank you all the same," answered Bob, laughing, as he stepped into the punt which came for him. As soon as he was on board, the *Saucy Sue* made sail for the French shore, and, under a crowd of canvas, was soon out of sight.

It was soon known at each preventive station along the coast that Bob Hanson was away in the *Saucy Sue*, and might ere long be expected back with a cargo of contraband. A sharp look-out was accordingly kept for him. Often and often before this, however, he had been expected, but the goods had been run, notwithstanding, and the *Saucy Sue* having appeared in the offing, had come into the harbour without an article of contraband on board, Bob and his crew looking innocent as lambs.

Tuesday came. Susan knew that on that night the attempt to run the cargo was to be made. There was no moon. The sun set red, and lowering over Durlstone Point, and dark clouds were seen chasing each other rapidly across the sky, rising from a dark bank which rested on the western horizon, while white-crested seas began to rise up out of the sombre green ocean, every instant increasing in number. The wind whistled mournfully among the bushes and the few stunted trees, with tops bending inland, which fringed the cliffs, and the murmur of the waves on the beach below changed ere long into a ceaseless roar.

Susan sat in her cottage, watching the last rays



*(Drawn by P. BARNES.)*

"What, Bob, off again?"—p. 376.

of the setting sun as her foot rocked her baby's cradle. She knew well the path to Durlstone Point along the cliffs. No longer able to restrain her anxiety (why more excited than usual on that evening, she could not have told), she left her child in charge of her young sister, who had come in to see her, and hurried out. The clouds came up thicker and thicker from the south-west, and the darkness rapidly increased. She had good reason to dread falling over the cliff. Several times she contemplated turning back; but the thought of her husband's danger urged her on. "If I could find the spotsman, Ned Dore, I would beseech him to warn the cutter off," she said to herself; "it can never be done on a night like this." She went on till she came to a dip, or gulley, when a break in the cliff occurred. A steep path led down the centre to the beach. She heard the sound of wheels, with the stamp of horses' feet, as if the animals had started forward impatiently and been checked, and there was also the murmur of several voices. Suddenly a light flashed close to her.

"Oh, Ned Dore, is that you?" she exclaimed. "Don't let them land to-night; there'll be harm come of it."

"No fear, Mrs. Hanson," said Dore, recognising her voice. "All's right—the cutter has made her signal, and I have answered it. Couldn't have a better time. The revenue men are all on the wrong scent, and we'll have every cask a dozen miles from this before they are back. Just you go home, good woman, and your husband will be there before long."

Susan, however, had no intention of leaving the spot. Again she entreated Dore, almost with tears, to warn off the cutter, alleging that there was already too much surf on the beach to allow the boats to land with safety. Dore almost angrily again refused, declaring that the cutter had already begun to unload, and that the boats would soon be in. Seeing that her entreaties were useless, she sat herself down on a rock jutting out of the cliff, and tried to peer into the darkness. She waited for some time, when footsteps were heard, and one of the men posted to watch, came running in with the information that a party of the revenue were approaching. Dore, coming up to her, pulled her by force below the rock on which she had been sitting. The other men concealed themselves under the bushes—among other rocks and in holes in the cliff—the lights were extinguished, and the carts were heard moving rapidly away. Not a word was spoken—the men held in their breath as the revenue officers approached. Poor Susan almost fainted with dread—not for herself, but for her husband. Where was he all the time? She knew too well the smugglers' mode of proceeding not to have good cause for fear.

"It was off here, sir, I saw the light flash," Susan heard one of the men say. "There is a road a little further up, and the cart wheels we heard must have passed along it."

"It is a likely spot, and must be watched."

Susan recognised the voice of the last speaker as that of Mr. Belland, the new lieutenant of the Coast Guard, reputed to be an active officer.

"Do you, Simpson and Jones, station yourselves on the top of the cliff, and fire your pistols if you see anything suspicious," he said. "Wait an hour, and then move back to your beats—there will be sea enough on by that time to save us further trouble."

"Ay, ay, sir," was the brief answer.

The two preventive men took up their stations, one of them directly above where Susan was crouching down, and the lieutenant and his party moved on.

While these events were taking place on shore, the *Saucy Sue* had approached the coast. Her usual signal was made and answered in a satisfactory manner, and preparations for landing the cargo were forthwith commenced. There were among its silks and other valuable articles, carefully packed in water-tight casks. The rest consisted of spirits in casks, two of which a man could carry on his shoulders. The casks were now secured together by ropes in separate parcels, eighteen or two dozen in each, and lowered overboard. The cutter's two boats then took them in tow, and approached the beach. As they drew near a small light, shown for an instant, warned them that the preventive men were on the alert. A weight sufficient to moor each parcel was on this dropped overboard, and the boats hung on to them.

"We must try the old dodge," said Hanson, after waiting for some time. "I'll take three parcels—Tom and Bili, you take the rest; we've never missed that way."

Saying this, he threw off his outer clothing, the two men he spoke to did the same, and all three slipping overboard, took hold of the tow-lines attached to the casks. The boats returned to the cutter, and were hoisted on board; after which, letting draw her fore-sheet, she stood out to sea. Hanson and his daring companions, buoyed up with a few corks under their arms, and knives in their hands to cut the casks from the moorings, remained with their heads just above the water, watching for the signal to tow them in. There they remained, their eager eyes turned towards the cliff—the dark sky above them, the foaming waters around. Every instant their position became more perilous; for as the tide rose, the ledge of rocks to the westward no longer afforded them the protection it had done at first, and the seas

came rolling in, and the surf broke more and more heavily every instant.

Could they pray for help? No. They knew well that they were engaged in unlawful work—that they were breaking the laws of their country—refusing to render to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's. Such was the picture the poor wife beheld in her mind's eye, as she gazed down into the dark waters, where she well knew that her husband then was.

Slowly the anxious hour passed away. The preventive men, however, still seemed suspicious that all was not right, and lingered at their posts. They at last hailed each other, and held a conversation in a low tone. They were close to where two of the men lay hid. Susan, in addition to her other cause of alarm, dreaded that an act of violence would be committed, if they did not move off. The preventive men would fire their pistols, certainly; but there still might be time for the tubs to be landed, and the smugglers to make their escape, before the rest of the Coast Guard could reach the spot. Her alarm increased when she found that Dore had crept away.

What she dreaded happened. The two preventive men came down into the hollow, as if about to descend to the beach. Suddenly they were set upon by a dozen men. One fired his pistol, the other was knocked down before he could draw a weapon from his belt. The first fought desperately, but a blow from a hanger brought him to the ground, where he lay mortally wounded. The arms of the other were pinioned, his mouth gagged, and the smugglers rushed down to the beach.

The signal was now made to Hanson and his companions. The smugglers waited to allow time for them to come in, every instant dreading the return of the Coast Guard. At length a cry was heard, "Help! help!" Several of the most daring rushed into the water. First one of Hanson's companions was dragged on shore, almost exhausted. The tubs were drawn in, and rapidly carried up the cliff. The second man was next found; but he had abandoned his tubs, and was more dead than alive. But where was Hanson himself?

Susan had found her way down to the beach. No one noticed her.

"I'm afraid the captain is gone. It was his plan, but a desperately dangerous one," she heard one of the men say. She stood speechless with terror.

Just then a light flashed from the cliff above.

"Each man for himself," was the cry, as the smugglers made their escape up the only path open to them.

She stood alone on the sand, with the seas roaring up to her feet. She heard footsteps approaching. "Oh! where—where is my husband?" she cried out.

"I don't know, missus; but murder has been committed, and some one has done it." It was one of the preventive men spoke.

Daylight at length broke. A tangled mass of tubs and rope, and a human form attached to them, was seen surging up and down in the foaming breakers. It was dragged on shore, and the poor young widow sank senseless on her husband's body.

## A WORD UPON HEAVY HEARTS.

BY THE REV. W. M. STATHAM.

**T**HERE are plenty of them, we may be quite certain of that. We are not, therefore, following the example of a professor lecturing on some extinct species to be found in the fossiliferous strata; but we are dealing with a very considerable mass of our fellow-men. He must be a poor observer of the life everywhere about him who does not discern the diversified anxieties which so often press on the heart of man. We have had lately resting on our industries a heavy incubus. Trade has been depressed; the wheels of commercial enterprise move creakingly, as though the labouring engine was about to stop. There are eyes watching for the returning light of cheerier days; there are nerves sensitive enough to catch the first sound of the "big drops" which may herald in the refreshing rain of returning

prosperity. We had been living in an atmosphere of artificial prosperity. Suddenly, on the well-remembered Black Friday, the clouds gathered over the commercial firmament—black ones, too—then a lurid light broke through the gathering storm: flash succeeded flash with intensified brilliancy, smiting the very system of things, and laying time-honoured fabrics of commercial enterprise low in the dust. At first, it injured those nearest and most concerned—shareholders and depositors—but its eddying circles widened until, in time, the entire community became more or less affected; and lately it has been an anxious time for many a household—men's hearts have almost failed them for fear, and beneath the converse of the family circle you may have detected an undertone of heavy-heartedness. There are great lessons for Christian people in the very fact

that the losses of this world produce so great depression. Would the anxiety be so heavy if the merchandise of our own souls with the heavenly kingdom were less? Should we feel it as deeply if the supplies of God's grace were withdrawn? Would a check in the great spiritual supplies affect us as manifestly and deeply as the loss of these material ones? And yet the *life* is more than meat. It were well if we could answer, Yea—if we felt the realities of our relation to eternity as keenly as we feel our visible relations to time.

Let heavy-heartedness be, however, either what we call natural or spiritual—connected with what is chiefly human or what is specially divine, there exists in the book of Proverbs a wonderful recipe for it. "Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it to stoop: but a good word maketh it glad; " a little thing, a light thing, a costless thing, a ready thing, "a good word maketh it glad."

Here, then, my friend, you need not try any of your quack medicines. You need not recommend theatres and wines; try something better than all these. Try the prescription which a wiser than the sons of men has written out in the sacred page of inspiration—try a good word.

It may be admitted that all heaviness is neither excusable nor removable. So long as the cause remains the cure is impossible. This applies to wilful profligacy and wickedness. All heaviness is not in the nature of it to be set down to necessity: it may arise from reaction after indulgence in ardent spirits, or after the degradations of other sensual joys. Moreover, it may arise from causes over which we have control, where there is less guilt, but certainly much folly. Such are the incessant efforts to seem what we are not—to equal or excel our neighbours, to dress or demean ourselves as others do. It may, too, arise from disappointment—ambitions which are as vain and empty as they are unsuccessful. Some kinds of heaviness must not look for human or divine sympathy, or the disease itself would be aggravated—the wrong would be fostered and fed. Still, laying aside the heaviness that springs from needless or even harmful sources, we come face to face with seasons in which "heaviness in the heart of man maketh it to stoop."

There is, for instance, the heaviness incidental to nervous temperament. There are some people very delicately strung indeed. They have inherited almost broken harps, so weak and badly tensioned are the strings. Little things affect them greatly—little slights, little doubts, little fears! They are quite unable to shake them off; the brain works morbidly, and the heart beats heavily. It is but a poor philosophy to tell them to make an effort—they are always making efforts. I am sure that if Christ were on earth

they would meet with his tenderest pity. He knows we are all dust; but he knows also that some dust has much more steel and substance in it than other dust; that some are naturally stronger and harder than others, and better able than others are to endure the hail and rain of criticism, or unkindness, or anxiety. This nervous weakness, of course, affects their religion. Even though pardoned by Christ, and having handled and felt that pardon in their experience, yet they take it to the light of consciousness, to try and read their release again and again. Even though adopted into God's family, they are constantly, nervously apprehensive that he may cast them off. There does exist the heaviness (the relief of which I shall write of presently), which every thoughtful student of life's heaviness should take into account.

Then there is heaviness incidental to unforeseen and unexpected trials. How rapidly the atmosphere changes! We go to rest, and there above us is the clear sky and the bright stars, and around us the sharp bracing air; we wake, and, lo! in the morning there is fog, and mist, and rain, like a heavy pall hanging over the fair face of Nature. So sometimes, unexpectedly, events darken our daily life. Our plans miscarry, promised help is forgotten, or our neighbour's trouble affects ourselves; our life-vessel is becalmed, the trade-wind fails; or, perhaps, we have missed the Gulf-stream current. Or, to change the figure from sail to steam—We are in the packet at sea; the steam working and whistling like a groom currying his master's horses, and the paddles turning the green water into bright white foam; the prow of the vessel plunging on, and casting diamonds profusely enough on to the broad bosom of the deep; we feel all the sweet sense of security and speed, when suddenly the paddles stop; feet hurry to and fro on the deck above our heads, and our placidity is broken in upon by fear. Thus it often is with human life. When, for instance, our usually good health is rudely broken in upon, or when our fortune is diminished and brought low by calamity or change; or when death sharply snaps the tie of some dear friendship in twain. Then comes heaviness—heaviness not to be eased in an hour; no, for God has lessons for us in it—darkness to lead us to the true Light; isolation to lead us to the true Friend; anxiety to lead us to a new study of the lilies; and to a more devout, faithful, earnest, dependence upon the providence of that Saviour who says, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world."

The expression in the Proverbs is: "Heaviness in the *heart*." This is the seat and centre of all life. Sorrow or joy, hope or dismay, have their abode in the heart. Yes, and there may be

sometimes lightness in the eye with lead in the heart. The heart, indeed, can throw off a great deal; but there are times when it is too hard pressed. Take the physical analogy. Ask your family doctor next time he calls, when your nerves have recovered his knock—that peculiar "Come to the door, come to the door, come—come; oh! I wish you would come to the door;"—when, I say, you have recovered from the doctor's knock, which seems to me to be a common genus—known everywhere to be like as two peas or two babies—then ask him how much blood the heart turns off in a day. Probably, it will startle you. Now and then, however, there is physically a broken heart; but it can bear a good deal, from a doctor's knock upwards. And in a higher sense the heart of humanity can bear much. Ah! there are hearts, dear reader, that have to bear what you and I have never known; not the battle of the outside world alone, but desertions and griefs, even in the circle of their friends; and, then, there are many who have to bear heaviness in sharing the grief of others. Hard hand-work is not to be compared with anxious people's lives. What is the work of the labourer, compared with that of the physician, or schoolmaster, or faithful clergyman—men who have constantly to think of others? And, be it remembered, that much of heaviness is incidental to duty, duty that some one must discharge, and in which a good word is gold indeed. There are certain easy people of great animal spirits who are not often heavy; but then they leave others the weights to bear. They leave their wives or sisters to the gnawing care of duty, whilst they spend their evenings out, and so cast all life's difficult detail on other brains. Those who are heavy-hearted are those who are often nobly earnest and valiant. Yes; there are relatives who are providing for others whilst the head of the family is getting into debt, and shouting at some public meeting about the wrongs which must be redressed in this great land, where Britons, &c., whilst the little Briton in his own home would be certainly better for new knicker-bockers and a little thoughtful, kindly care. It is very well to help to lighten the taxation of your country; but it is a nobler thing first to lighten and brighten your own home. When we see how the active, the earnest, and the devout often suffer, it were well if we pondered what a kindly word can do, and, above all, if we avoided sharp and bitter ones. Let unkindness never send another arrow into the hearts around and about us all. They will not be with us very long, nor we with them. Let unskillful carelessness never wound; let pride never pass over the poorer friends with cool indifference. Let us help men and women, seeing there is enough, indeed, to make them sigh. The proverb shows the con-

nection that exists between the *mind and the man*: "heaviness in the heart of man maketh it to stoop." The picture is beautiful. We see how weakened men become by heavy-heartedness. They seem less able to cope with difficulty; and so, indeed, it is. Make a man's heart light, and you make him stronger; weaken him there, and he is enfeebled—he stoops as though age and infirmity were coming upon him. He is not so able to face his adversary as he was before; not so able to bid defiance to the storm and breast the waves. We should soon become a stooping race, if it were not for the smile of man and the kind blessing of God. Of course, I have felt as you have that this truth runs through the Bible, that God's favour and blessing makes us happy—happy even in tribulation; but we have also as clearly revealed the relation we sustain to each other: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

The prescription, a good word, is manifestly God's word, for God is the abbreviation of the Good. The Gospel is pre-eminently glad tidings, or good words; and when the heart is heavy with a sense of guilt, what a good word is that: "The blood of his dear Son cleanseth us from all sin." When there is heaviness concerning the path of Christian perseverance, what a good word is that: "Those whom thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost;" and when the heart is wistfully thinking of the distant and the dead, what a good word is that: "If it were not so I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you." And when, worn with weariness and unrest, we lean on life's broken staff and weep, what a good word is that: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest!" I am sure of this, that in the providence of human life, whatever be the speciality of our sorrow or the character of our difficulty, there is always some jewel of truth waiting to flash out its bright promise upon us, if we would but peruse the sacred page. Oh! these good words—all these good words—indited as they are by the Divine Spirit, why are they not oftener used for strengthening faith and deepening comfort by the children of God? The influence of the specific is wonderful. Not only does a good word remove the heaviness, but it *maketh us glad*. The word might, indeed, be translated from the Hebrew as *merry*, so completely does it lift us out of the depths of distress. Glad! Yes, glad; for the good word assures us that beneath all there is a Father's will, a Father's hand, a Father's heart. All sense of isolation and misery is gone. We can give thanks and sing; God in Christ is with us and heaviness is gone! We speak of Nature as smiling, and so she does. The river sparkles, the brooks murmur, the birds sing, the cattle

rejoice, and God would have us rejoice in him, and again rejoice.

But there should be a human embodiment of the divine example. We should be followers of God as dear children, and walk in love. If we see a wife, a husband, a child, a servant, a companion heavy, we must skilfully try to remove that heaviness; it is not good for health, it is not good for industry—it is good for nothing. We must not, indeed, try to make the wicked merry, neither share *their* merriment—it is hollow. Let us not give them the licence of our assent; it is worse than hollow, it has in it a sound of death.

Some there are who need, however, the *good* word. God means by that, honest and true, not merely pleasant. A parent's word to a child may be *good*, though severe; a servant's may not be good, though pleasant, for it may be the glossing over of faultiness and sin.

But good words mean *kind* words as well as *true* words. Ah! what a world this would be if it were not for the words of Christ; and what a world it would be if you and I could not say cheery things to each other—honest, hearty, loving words. They do not cost us much. We will carry about with us more of these than ever—good words for heavy hearts.

#### RECOVERED.

**F**ORTH issuing from my long-kept cottage door,  
Released from recent agonising pain,  
How throbs my heart to tread these tracks  
once more,  
And breathe the untainted air of heaven again!  
I mind me how the die was all but cast,  
How like the unseen weapon was to fall,  
And the sad weeks of sickness overpast

Be crowned with death, the issue of it all.  
And as I think of this, I feel a growth  
Of gratitude my heart and bosom swell,  
A sweet enlargement of the breast, that show'th  
More than the tongue may speak or words could  
tell;  
The which God takes as a thank-offering,  
From one who knows the notes, but cannot sing.

J. D.

#### GRANDPAPA'S STORY.



"H, if you please, grandpapa, do tell us a story," said little Alice.

"Oh, yes; and let it be about yourself, when you were a boy," said Arthur.

"And tell us something wrong you did," chimed in Harry; "all grown-up people tell us how good they were when they were children; but they don't tell us if they were ever naughty."

"No," said Arthur, "if you do anything wrong it always is, When we were children if we had done so and so, we should have been well beaten, instead of forgiven, as you are; or—"

"Oh, do be quiet, Arthur and Harry," said grave Ernest, "or grandpa won't be able to tell us any story before we go to bed. Please to begin, grandpa."

"Well, my dears," said grandpapa, "I do not exactly know how to begin, or what to begin on; but if you will seat yourselves, I will try and think. I suppose it must be about myself?"

"Oh, yes!" cried all the children.

"Very well. And now, if you think you can keep quiet and sit still, Harry, I'll begin."

So saying, grandpapa cleared his throat, and settling himself comfortably in his arm-chair, began as follows:—

"When I was a very little boy I lived at a large farm down in Shropshire. I had no brothers and sisters, so I was a great pet with my father and mother; my mother was especially fond of me, and spoilt me by letting me have nearly all I asked for, and I had only to cry to get anything I wanted. I, like other boys of about my own age, went to a school kept by a gentleman, about half-an-hour's walk from our house. About half-way between the school and where my father lived there stood an old house, inhabited by an old man whom the people in the village said was a miser; but, I believe, he was only an ill-tempered, quarrelsome, eccentric old man, who delighted to tease us boys and upset our games, if he happened to come near us. We, from that cause, naturally disliked him, and showed our dislike whenever we could by making all sorts of noises, just under his window, on half-holidays, about the hour we knew the old gentleman would be taking his nap, robbing a fine apple-tree which he had in his garden, and now and then breaking one of his windows. You must not think that we did not get punished for all this, for we did very often, by being kept in on half-holidays to learn lessons instead of going and enjoying ourselves with our companions, and by having to pay for the windows with our pocket-money, for the

old gentleman was generally on the look-out for us; and if he did see us, and could tell how many there were, and if it were us schoolboys (as sometimes the village boys persecuted him, for he was generally disliked), he would send round to our master to inquire into the matter, and then we were obliged to confess, for we were too honourable to let the whole school suffer for what half a dozen had done.

"Now this old man was particularly fond of his garden, which was a large one for the size of the house, for he lived alone, excepting an old manservant, who was as stingy and crabbed as his master. In his garden there were some of the finest pear and apple trees that you could see, and he also had some very fine wall fruit—one peach-tree in particular that he prided himself on. He let no one attend to the garden but himself, and his chief delight seemed to be in watching his fruit slowly ripen day by day. The wall of the garden was very low, and covered at the top with pieces of broken glass to keep the boys from climbing over; not that it did, for we used, as I have told you, to get over and take the apples, though we often cut ourselves in the attempt. I had to pass the house every day on my way to and from school, therefore I also had noticed the peaches, and on hot, dusty days I had often longed for one.

"One very hot afternoon, as I was returning from school, very hot and thirsty, I happened to glance at the peaches, and they looked so cool and delicious that I could no longer withstand the temptation to take one; so I scrambled over the wall, first looking cautiously round to see that no one was in sight.

"When I had taken one, I took two or three more, and, stuffing them into my pockets, I crept towards the wall to get back, when just as I was about to get over, I heard the door of the house open, and had only time to conceal myself behind some bushes that were near, when the old servant came out, and, walking down to the gate, stood looking up and down the road for his master. How long I was there I don't know; but it seemed an enormous time to me, crouching tremblingly behind the bushes, hardly daring to breathe for fear of being discovered. At last he went in, and I was able to come from my hiding-place. As I was getting over the wall I cut my hand with the glass rather severely; however, I bound my handkerchief round it, and hastened home. When I got into the house my mother met me, and asked me how it was I was so late from school; I told her I had been kept, and then hastened to my bedroom to hide the stolen fruit and bathe my hand.

"Having done so, and smoothed my hair, I went down-stairs to tea, when the first thing my father said to me was—

"'Hallo, Dick, what's the matter with your hand?'

"'I've only cut it, father,' I stammered.

"'How came you to do that?' said my mother.

"'Oh, I fell down and cut it with the gravel in the play-ground,' said I, turning very red and hot, for this was the first time I had told any falsehoods.

"'Well, never mind, Dick,' said my father, 'go on with your tea. I dare say your hand will be well soon,' he added kindly, evidently thinking my face flushed with pain instead of shame.

"Well, I passed a wretched evening that day. I was unable to fix my attention on my lessons because I always found myself listening to every sound in the house, and I could not endure my mother in the room where I was, for fear she should ask any more questions; still less could I bear her to be out, for then I fancied she would go to my room and find the fruit—I having hidden it in one of my drawers, not knowing where else to put it. At last my bed-time came, and I jumped up directly the clock struck, thereby very much astonishing my parents, for it was a rare thing for me to go to bed of my own accord, and I generally begged to sit up a little longer when I was told to go.

"I was very glad to get to my room that night, for I thought that if I could eat the fruit, and so get rid of it, I should no longer be in fear of being discovered; so directly I was in my room I proceeded to lock my door, so that nobody should come in, and going to my drawer, I took one of the peaches, and was just about to eat it when I heard something say, 'Dick, Dick, Dick, Dick!'

"I turned round with a start, but saw nobody; then I listened; but the only sound I could hear was the wind moaning in the chimney. So I said to myself that it was only fancy, and I turned and resolutely bit a piece out of the peach, and then, louder than before, something, or somebody, said, 'Dick, Dick, Dick, Dick!'

"It frightened me so this time that I nearly choked myself, and was unable to hear anything for coughing for a long time, and when I did listen I only heard the wind moaning as before, and the great clock ticking outside my door. Then I determined to look all over my room, and see if there was any one concealed in it; so, seizing my candle, which I then noticed was a very small piece and would not last much longer, I looked under the bed, and in every place possible and impossible for anybody to hide; but could see no one. Well, I did not know what to do. I could not eat the fruit, for directly I touched it that dreadful voice said, 'Dick, Dick, Dick, Dick!'

"I trembled with fear so that I was obliged to sit down. I tried to go to the door and call some one; but I could neither move nor speak, I could only sit where I was, with my hands so tightly clenched that afterwards I found my nails had been dug into my flesh; not that I felt it then, for I could feel nothing. I was paralysed with fear. At last the light went out, and then I was, if possible, more frightened.

The wind was very high, and my chimney had a cowl on it, so that every time the wind blew and turned this cowl round, it shrieked and groaned till I fancied all sorts of demons were haunting me because I was such a wicked boy as to steal. At other times the noise which the chimney made never frightened me; but that night I was so nervous that any noise in the farmyard or the house I imagined to be unearthly; even the clock (which I could hear every now and then when there was a lull in the wind), with its everlasting tick, tick, grew wearisome to me, and seemed to tick louder than ever it had before.

"At last I must have fallen asleep and dreamt something I cannot now remember, for the next thing I do recollect at all distinctly, was lying on the bed, and hearing my mother say, as she bathed my head and held salts to my nose, 'Hush, hush; you have been dreaming, that is all.' Then I noticed that the room was full of servants and farm-men, who had evidently rushed up from their supper to see what was the matter, and were now staring at me with astonishment and alarm written on their faces.

"The first thing my mother did when she saw my senses return to me was to send all the servants away, assuring them that they could do nothing for me, and that I should soon be well; and then she undressed me, and put me to bed, which I did not leave for two or three days. During that time I told my mother, with many tears, all I had done. She was very much shocked and grieved, but seemed to think I had been sufficiently punished by the fright I had gone through. My mother then told me how they had found me. She said she fancied I had not been in my usual spirits, but had attributed it to the heat of the weather, and the close attention I had paid to my studies lately. After I had gone to bed that night my mother had asked my father if he could not take me to London, for she thought a change would do me good, and she knew I had a great desire to see London. While they were talking and arranging plans for my pleasure, they heard a scream, and, on going to my door, found it locked and all silent within. My father wished to go downstairs again; but my mother was so positive that it was I who screamed, and that I might be in a fit, or had fainted, that at last my father forced the door, and when my mother rushed in she found me on the floor to all appearance lifeless. They brought me to with a great deal of trouble, and as soon as I was able to speak I clung to my mother and begged her not to leave me; and she calmed me by telling me I had been dreaming, and that she would stay with me.

"Of course I did not go to London with my father.

I was very much disappointed at not being able to go; but I thought I deserved it, and therefore let nobody see how disappointed I was.

"I had not told my mother when my father went away of what I had done, so he knew nothing about my having stolen the peaches, and went to London fancying I was to be petted because I was ill; but when he came back, and my mother told him all about it, he was very angry, and said that I had been so spoilt by being allowed to do just as I liked, and have just what I wanted at home that I did not know what I was about, and that therefore I should be sent to boarding-school; which I accordingly was, to the great grief of my mother, who had a horror of such places, fancying that they injured a boy's morals. My father said stuff and nonsense; that as I had already distinguished myself by stealing, he considered I had no morals to injure. And, in his opinion, every boy that was strong and healthy should be sent to boarding-school, and, therefore, I was sent.

"I stayed at school some years, and all the time I was there I never joined in any plans for robbing orchards, destroying other people's property, and doing a variety of other things of which boys are so fond, and which they term, in their horrid and foolish slang, 'jolly larks.' So you see the lesson was not without its effect on me. And now, my dears, I have finished my story," said grandpapa.

"But you never told us what the old man said when he missed his fruit," said Arthur.

"No, nor what your mother did with it," said Harry.

"And you did not tell us what said Dick, Dick, Dick," said little Alice.

"You ask me so many questions, my dear children, before I have time to answer one, that you quite bewilder me, and I do not know which to answer first; but as I think I can answer both your questions in one, Arthur and Harry, I will begin with yours.

"You want to know what my mother did with the fruit? Well, she took it to the old man, told him what I had done, and offered to pay for it; but he would not allow her, but said she was to send me to him to beg his pardon. Then my mother told him I was ill, and could not come; but that I had promised never to touch his fruit again. So he was satisfied, and laughed when he heard I was ill through fright, and said it served me right. And now, Alice, you want to know what frightened me by saying 'Dick, Dick, Dick'; well, it was a large clock that stood on the landing, just outside my door, and that sounded to my excited imagination as if it said 'Dick, Dick, Dick, Dick,' instead of 'tick, tick, tick, tick!'"

F. L.